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RECENT FRENCH BOOKS

Paul Bourget: *Lazarine*.

Two women characters full of emotion are splendidly portrayed by this master of psychological observation.

Colette Yver: *Mirabelle de Pampelune*.

Three stories with war experiences by the best protagonist of feminism in France.

J. H. Rosny Aine: *L'Enigme de Givreusse*.

A war novel drawn by a masterly pen.

Albert Boissiere: *L'Extravagant Teddy de la Croix Rouge Anglaise*. An amusing persiflage of a Frenchman who went with the English Red Cross.

Henri Barbusse: *Le Feu (Journal d'une escouade)*.

The most important book of the year, of which so far one hundred and thirty thousand copies have been sold. It is one of the most striking portraits of life in war.

Claude Farrere: *Quatorze Histoires de Soldats*. A highly interesting collection of stories, soldiers' experiences drawn by an experienced psychologist.

Paul Patte: *Le Cran*.

A collection of stories showing the magnificent spirit of the French people, with an interesting preface of General Niox and postface of Mr. Frederic Masson of the French Academy.

Hugues Le Roux: *Au Champ d'Honneur*.

A memorial volume of this prominent writer to his two sons who have given their lives to their country.

Las as Peints eux-memes

A collection of aviators' stories, experiences of French flying men told by themselves.

Maurice Maeterlinck: *'L'Hote Inconnu*.

Although this volume has been published in English two years ago, it is only now issued in the original language, with slight changes brought about by the experiences of the war.

Maurice Barres: *Les Diverses Familles Spirituelles de la France*. An interesting collection of essays on the different tendencies of the French people of to-day, showing how they are working now all together for the safety of their country.

Pierre Lasserre: *L'Esprit de la Musique Francaise*.

A very timely volume on the Masters of French Music in the past.

Victor Giraud: *La Civilisation Francaise*.

This essay has been given the Prix d'Eloquence for 1916 by the French Academy. It is a concise presentation of French Civilization.

Sem: *Un Pekin Sur le Front*.

An amusing set of sketches by this caricaturist illustrated with 150 drawings in the text.

Any of the books mentioned above can be had at Brentanos. [Ed.]

A CARTOONIST AS WRITER



... shivering and forlorn in the rain at Verdun ...

Sem: *Un pékin sur le front. Ouvrage illustré de 150 Dessins de l'Auteur. Préface de Fernand Vandérem. Éditions Pierre Lafitte, 90 Champs Élysées, Paris.*

If a master of brush, pen or pencil writes at all he needs must write well. He is bound to choose clear, graphic, and vivid words; he has the eye for details; he knows how to arrange and to group his matter effectively, and, above all, his language has a certain virginal spontaneousness and freshness which is altogether delightful and, only too often, sadly missing in the polished and colourless vocabulary of the professional writer. This truism is again brought to attention by the new book of Sem, the famous French cartoonist,

which contains articles written for *Le Journal* at different periods of the war and illustrated with inimitable drawings by the author. Of course, it is a journalistic book, but that adds rather to than detracts from its charm, and though many of the articles refer to events in the beginning of the great war, the whole book is, nevertheless, wonderfully alive with its strong and compelling enthusiasm and its quite delicious fun and drollery. M. Fernand Vandérem has written the introduction to the book, and he, the master of style, finds words of highest praise for the literary qualities of Sem's book. Yet, so he tells us, he is hardly surprised to find these qualities in the work of Sem. "It is one of humanity's mistakes," says M. Vandérem, "not to take humor seriously," and he argues that whosoever has at any time admired Sem's drawings must have detected there the underlying strong vitality, the deep knowledge of human nature, the eye for true and real values which make this war-book of the French cartoonist a treat to every reader. In whatever mood Sem chooses to be: if he presents himself in a charmingly funny little extravaganza sitting shivering and forlorn in the rain at Verdun; if he gives in *Le Moulin de L'Espion* a night-picture of wonderful artistry and *délicatesse*; if he delineates in *Les Statues de Boue* the miseries of the soldiers and the sublime stoicism with which these miseries are endured, or if he shows in words and drawings full of an elegant *élan* the proud gallantry of his heroes and the unconquerable glory of the victorious flag, he understands as no one else to make us feel, see, hear, ah! even smell with him, he lets us share his enthusiasms, his emotions, his smile and his tears, and to be with this "pékin" at the front is something which none of our readers should willingly miss.



... the unconquerable glory of the flag ...